

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BELGRADE 8517

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, YO
SUBJECT: POTPOURRI OF THE INTERNAL SCENE

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1. DESCRIBING YUGOSLAV POLITICS IS REMINISCENT OF BLIND
MEN TRYING TO DESCRIBE AN ELEPHANT BY TOUCH -- EACH DESCRIBES
THE SMALL PART HE CAN FEEL, BUT NONE CAPTURES THE BEAST IN
ITS ENTIRETY. ALTHOUGH SYNTHESIS IS DIFFICULT, THE FOLLOWING
FRAGMENTS MAY BE ILLUMINATING.

2. TITO'S HEALTH -- A PROFESSOR WHO REGULARLY ASSOCIATES
WITH THOSE CLOSE TO TITO REPORTS THAT TITO IS BECOMING VERY
NERVOUS, POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF THE VARIOUS DRUGS PRESCRIBED
FOR HIM OVER THE YEARS. ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCE HE HAS
BEEN OBSERVED TO THROW A PEN ACROSS THE ROOM WHEN UPSET,
KICK HIS WIFE JOVANKA WHEN ANGRY AT HER, AND BERATE LCY
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY DOLANC IN PUBLIC. BECAUSE OF HIS
NERVOUSNESS, TITO IS TAKING TRANQUILIZERS.

3. CULT OF PERSONALITY -- IN RECENT WEEKS TITO HAS MADE
FRONT PAGE "NEWS" BY RECEIVING HONORS FROM THE HIGHER
SCHOOL OF MILITARY STUDIES (THE FIRST DOCTORATE OF
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MILITARY SCIENCE), THE CHAMBER OF ECONOMY (ITS ORIGINAL
CHARTER), AND THE AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION (A GOLDEN
PLAQUE). DEFENSE SECRETARY LJUBICIC CONTRIBUTED A PAEAN
TO TITO'S "EPOCHAL" MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE WHICH "BORBA"
CARRIED ON ITS FRONT PAGE, AND TANJUG DISSEMINATED ABROAD.
LJUBICIC LEFT THE UNESCAPABLE IMPRESSION THAT TITO

RANKS WITH NAPOLEON AND FREDERICK THE GREAT, WHOM ENGELS HAD DESCRIBED AS THE GREATEST MILITARY LEADERS OF ALL TIME. COINCIDING BREZHNEV'S SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY, THIS ACCLAIM MAY HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO COMPETE WITH THE ADULATION ACCORDED THE SOVIET LEADER. IT MIGHT ALSO RESULT FROM A GREATER NEED ON THE PART OF AN AGING TITO FOR REASSURANCE THAT HE IS STILL POWERFUL AND LOVED. WHILE THE TITO CULT HAS BEEN RELATIVELY MORE RESTRAINED THAN THAT OF SUCH OTHER COMMUNIST DICTATORS AS STALIN AND KIM IL SUNG, HIS LIEUTENANTS MAY NOW COMPETE FOR HIS FAVOR BY PAYING EVER MORE EXTRAVAGANT HOMAGE, PARTICULARLY IN 1977, WHEN HIS EIGHTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN MAY WILL ALSO MARK THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS LEADERSHIP OF THE YUGOSLAV COMMUNIST PARTY.

4. POLITICAL SEASON -- THE NEXT YEAR OR MORE, IN FACT, IS LIKELY TO PRODUCE A CONFUSING MOSAIC OF CONFLICTING "LIBERAL" AND "NARROW-MINDED" EVENTS AS POLITICANS MANEUVER IN PREPARATION FOR THE ELEVENTH LC CONGRESS AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS, BOTH DUE IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1978, AND AS SOME OF THE DISCIPLINE AND CEMENT INHERENT IN THE STABLE CADRE SITUATION SINCE 1972 COMES UNSTUCK. REPUBLICAN PARTY CONGRESSMEN WILL PRECEDE THE NATIONAL MEETING, AND THE LABOR UNION WILL HOLD ITS CONGRESS AS EARLY AS MARCH 1977. WITH MOST OR ALL SENIOR JOBS IN THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY LIKELY TO CHANGE HANDS IN THE COURSE OF THE NEXT EIGHTEEN MONTHS, THE POLITICKING IS LIKELY TO MOUNT IN INTENSITY.

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5. NOTES ON THE LEADERSHIP -- PURGED INTERIOR SECRETARY ALEXANDER RANKOVIC HAS SUFFERED HIS THIRD HEART ATTACK AND WAS HOSPITALIZED ON ABOUT DECEMBER 10, ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE. - OFFICIALS IN TITO'S PERSONAL OFFICE TALK OPENLY OF THEIR DISSATISFACTION WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF SERBIA (VLASKELIC, MADKOVIC, VASILJEVIC AND IVAN

STAMBOLIC), AN EMPLOYEE THERE TOLD A FRIEND. - SENATOR JAVITS WAS OFFERED AN APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENCY MEMBER CVIJETIN MIJATOVIC IN PLACE OF EDVARD KARDELJ, WHOM HE HAD REQUESTED TO SEE. YUGOSLAV OFFICIALS SPECIFICALLY NOTED TO JAVITS THAT MIJATOVIC IS KARDELJ'S DEPUTY ON THE FEDERAL COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THAT HE HAD ATTENDED THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN COLOMBO. MIJATOVIC THUS APPEARS TO BE PLAYING AN INCREASINGLY ACTIVE ROLE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PERHAPS IN PART DUE TO KARDELJ'S ILLNESS.

6. BOSNIANS -- MIJATOVIC IS FROM BOSNIA, PERHAPS THE MOST DOGMATIC OF THE YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS. A YUGOSLAV JOURNALIST RECENTLY SAID THAT BOSNIA'S LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS' PRESIDENT MIKULIC RUNS BOSNIA LIKE A "LITTLE CEAUSESCU" AND THAT NUMEROUS "UNNECESSARY" POLITICAL TRIALS ARE HELD THERE. MIKULIC RECENTLY MADE AN OFFICIAL TRIP TO ANGOLA AND BOSNIAN TU SECRETARY MUNIR MESIKOVIC RECEIVED A CUBAN DELEGATION IN BELGRADE, POSSIBLY INDICATING A BOSNIAN AFFINITY FOR RADICAL NON-ALIGNED STATES.

7. LCY MEMBERSHIP -- THE LCY IS LARGER NOW THAN AT ANY TIME IN ITS HISTORY -- 1,400,000 MEMBERS OR 6.5 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION. LC SECRETARY FOR ORGANIZATION AND CADRE JURE BILIC SAID RECENTLY THAT A PARTY OF 2 MILLION MEMBERS IS QUITE POSSIBLE IN THE FUTURE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT THE MOST CREATIVE YOUNGER INTELLECTUALS HAVE NOT JOINED THE PARTY. PARTY MEMBERS DOMINATE KEY

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SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS, HOWEVER. IN THE MILITARY, DEFENSE SECRETARY LJUBICICEK SAID IN A SPEECH THIS MONTH THAT 98 PERCENT OF ALL OFFICERS AND 86 PERCENT OF YOUNGER OFFICERS ARE LCY MEMBERS. A RECENT EDITORIAL REPORTED THAT 97-98 PERCENT OF THE DELEGATES TO LOCAL ASSEMBLIES (MESNE ZAJEDNICE) AND ALMOST ALL LABOR LEADERS ARE COMMUNISTS.

8. ECONOMY-GENERATED POLITICAL PROBLEMS -- THE PROSPECT IN 1977 IS FOR EITHER A CONTINUATION OF 1976'S LOW RATE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, WHICH WILL EXACERBATE REGIONAL SQUABBLES ABOUT THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES, OR A HIGH RATE OF INFLATION, WHICH MIGHT PRODUCE POPULAR DISCONTENT, OR BOTH. REFTEL.
UNEMPLOYMENT, FED IN PART BY THE RETURN OF GUEST WORKERS FROM WESTERN EUROPE, AND THE CHRONIC HOUSING SHORTAGE WILL COMPOUND THE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES GENERATED BY THE ECONOMY.

9. LIBERALIZATION?-- WITH THE ECONOMIC REFORM OF 1965 AND THE PURGE OF INTERIOR MINISTER RANKOVIC IN 1966, YUGOSLAVIA BEGAN TO MOVE IN FREER, MORE LIBERAL DIRECTION. THE PENDULUM SWUNG IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION BEGINNING IN 1971, WHEN TITO AND DOLANC PURGED THE "NATIONALISTIC" CROATIAN LC LEADERSHIP AND ISSUED "THE LETTER" CALLING FOR INCREASED PARTY ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT SOCIETY. YUGOSLAVIA HAS SINCE BEEN IN A PERIOD OF "TIGHTENING," OF ORTHODOXY, OF ENHANCED POLICE AND PARTY POWER. THERE ARE NOW SOME VERY RPT VERY TENTATIVE SIGNS THAT A NEW "LIBERAL" CYCLE MAY BE IN THE OFFING. THEORETICIAN AND SERBIAN POLITICO

NAJDAN PASIC REPORTEDLY APPEALED TO TITO IN A RECENT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BELGRADE 8517

MEETING TO EJTE THE REPRESSIVE CLIMATE IN SOCIAL AND
HISTORICAL SCIENCES AS THE POLITICAL SITUATION POST-
1971 WAS NOW STABILIZED. TITO IS SAID TO HAVE RESPONDED

POSITIVELY. A NEW FILM, "BEACH GUARD IN THE WINTER
PERIOD," HAS RECEIVED FAVORABLE REVIEWS IN SPITE OF
ITS CANDID TREATMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND EMIGRATION.
THE HERO IS UNABLE TO FIND WORK IN BELGRADE AND AT
FILM'S END HE LEAVES TO SEEK HIS FORTUNE IN SWEDEN.
POLITICALLY, A STAFF MAN AT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS
TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT THE NEXT LEGISLATURE, WHICH
WILL BE ELECTED IN 1978, WILL CONTAIN A HIGH PROPORTION
OF MANAGERS AND TECHNICIANS, WHO ARE NOW UNDERREPRESENTED.
LCY LEADERS DOLANC AND BILIC, WHILE URGING GREATER LC
ACTIVITY, HAVE CALLED FOR GREATER RESPECT FOR THOSE WHO
ARE NOT COMMUNISTS AND FOR A GREATER SOCIAL ROLE FOR
THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE AND LABOR UNION, MASS ORGANI-
ZATIONS WHICH ARE DOMINATED BY THE LC BUT COMPOSED
LARGELY OF NON-COMMUNISTS. AND SEVERAL YUGOSLAV
JOURNALISTS AND A LAWYER HAVE TOLD US THEY SEE THE
SITUATION EASING -- BUT THIS MAY BE A PRE-CSCE MESSAGE
DESIGNED SPECIALLY FOR WESTERN EARS. WHETHER THESE
DEVELOPMENTS ARE SIGNS OF A COMING LIBERALIZATION,
PART OF THE PRE-1978 JOCKEYING MENTIONED ABOVE OR JUST
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RANDOM EXCEPTIONS TO THE DOMINANT DISCIPLINE APPROACH IN FORCE SINCE 1971 REMAINS TO BE SEEN. BUT THAT RATHER REGULAR LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE SWINGS IN YUGOSLAV POLITICAL HISTORY REQUIRE US TO WATCH FOR THE NEXT TURNING POINT.

10. REPRESSION -- THERE REMAIN AMPLE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE HARD LINE. ON DEC 21 A COURT IN MOSTAR SENTENCED A TOMISLAV SAKOTA TO THREE YEARS IN PRISON FOR HOSTILE PROPAGANDA. HE WAS CHARGED WITH FALSELY

DESCRIBING CONDITIONS IN YUGOSLAVIA FROM A NATIONALIST STANDPOINT. ON DEC 24 A CASE OF LIBEL BROUGHT BY THE "CHRISTIAN ADVENTIST CHURCH" AGAINST A JOURNALIST WAS DISMISSED BY A COURT IN NIS. JOURNALIST SVETOZAR JOVANOVIC HAD CHARGED IN AN ARTICLE THAT THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH ARE IN DIRECT CONTRADICTION TO THE SOCIAL ORDER BECAUSE THEY CALL FOR CHILDREN OF THE FAITHFUL NOT TO ATTEND SCHOOL ON SATURDAYS, NOT TO SERVE IN THE MILITARY, AND SO FORTH. THE JUDGE RULED THAT JOVANOVIC'S ARTICLE DID NOT CONSTITUTE SLANDER. ACCORDING TO A NEWS REPORT, "IT WAS SAID" AT COURT THAT CERTAIN RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES OFTEN DO EXCEED THE BOUNDS PERMITTED TO THEM BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS.

11. THE LAW ON ASSOCIATED LABOR -- PASSED WITH GREAT FANFARE AT THE END OF NOVEMBER AND DESCRIBED AS THE "LITTLE CONSTITUTION" BECAUSE IT PRESCRIBES IN DETAIL THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ECONOMY, THE LAW ON ASSOCIATED LABOR HAS ALMOST DROPPED FROM SIGHT, ALTHOUGH ITS IMPLEMENTATION IS DESCRIBED AS A PRIORITY TASK FOR 1977. A FULL-PAGE ADVERTISEMENT IN "POLITIKA" ANNOUNCED A THREE-DAY SEMINAR FOR OFFICIALS WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION, BUT THE PROCESS IS LIKELY TO BE SLOW. A YUGOSLAV LAWYER, WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LAW, SAID THAT HE HAD CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT EVEN READ IT BECAUSE IT IS SO LONG. HE PLANS TO TAKE IT OUT AND CONSULT APPROPRIATE PASSAGES IF NECESSARY FOR A CASE. A YUGOSLAV POLITICAL ECONOMIST WAS SIMILARLY OFFHAND WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE LAW, WHICH IS OFFICIALLY DESCRIBED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT LEGISLATION SINCE THE 1974 CONSTITUTION. HE SAID THAT "SOME OF THE THINGS PEOPLE HAVE PUT IN THAT LAW JUST WON'T WORK." A YUGOSLAV JOURNALIST PRAISED THE LAW, AS HAD ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT GLIGOROV, FOR GIVING EACH FIRM (BASIC ORGANIZATION OF ASSOCIATED LABOR - BOAL) COMPLETE

CONTROL OVER ITS OWN INCOME, BUT HE THEN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MANAGEMENT AND PARTY LEADERS FACED ENORMOUS PRESSURE TO PREVENT THE FAILURES OF BOAL'S IN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS AND COULD PROBABLY STILL FORCE THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM PROSPEROUS TO COLLAPSING UNITS.

12. PEASANT RESISTANCE TO "ASSOCIATION" -- THE GOVT IS MOUNTING A CAMPAIGN TO "ASSOCIATE" PRIVATE FARMERS WITH LARGE AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES OR WITH EACH OTHER IN COOPERATIVES. WHILE SUCH ASSOCIATION IS MUCH NEEDED TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY, THE PEASANTS ARE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC. THE MISCONCEPTION IS WIDESPREAD THAT "ASSOCIATION" IS THE SAME AS POSTWAR COLLECTIVIZATION, ACCORDING TO VASIL DIMOVSKI, RAHE PRESIDENT OF THE MACEDONIAN FEDERATION OF ZADRUGA (RURAL COMMUNITIES). WHILE ASSOCIATION MAKES SENSE ECONOMICALLY, IT IS PROBABLY ALSO INTENDED TO FACILITATE THE PENETRATION OF THE LC INTO RURAL AREAS. MEMBERSHIP HAS BEEN HISTORICALLY LOW AMONG PRIVATE PEASANTS, WHO HOLD OVER 80 PERCENT OF THE LAND AND CONSTITUTE ABOUT 35 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION BUT ONLY FIVE PERCENT OF THE LC.

13. COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST -- THE 1974 CONSTITUTION PROVIDED FOR THE FORMATION OF "COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST" TO ADMINISTER SOCIAL SERVICES LIKE HEALTH, EDUCATION, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND EVEN CULTURE. INSTEAD OF BEING FURNISHED BY THE GOVT, THESE SERVICES WERE PLACED UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SPECIAL ASSEMBLIES COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THOSE WHO CONSUME IT (ENTERPRISES, SOCIO-POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS, ETC.). THE CONSUMERS CONTRIBUTE FUNDS DIRECTLY TO THE COMMUNITY OF INTEREST AND HAVE A VOICE IN THEIR EXPENDITURE, RATHER THAN LEAVING THE JOB TO THE COMMUNE BUREAUCRACY. THE NEW SYSTEM IS IN ITS INFANCY, BUT SEEMS TO HAVE CHANGED LITTLE, ASIDE FROM INCREASING EMPLOYMENT, PARTICULARLY OF LAWYERS. A DOCTOR IN A BELGRADE HOSPITAL SAYS THAT "ABSOLUTELY NOTHING" HAS CHANGED UNDER THE NEW SYSTEM. A LAWYER ON THE STAFF OF THE INTERST COMMUNITIES OF A BELGRADE COMMUNE EXPLAINED THAT THE COMMUNITIES NOW HAVE A JOINT PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF 12. THE COMMUNE HAD PREVIOUSLY EMPLOYED ABOUT 20 PEOPLE TO DO THE SAME WORK, AND THEY ARE STILL EMPLOYED IN THE COMMUNE PERFORMING OTHER DUTIES. ANOTHER PROBLEM THIS STAFFER NOTED IS THAT THE (PART TIME) DELEGATES TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE INTEREST COMMUNITIES ACCEPT UNCRITICALLY ANY AND ALL PROPOSALS MADE BY THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF. THIS IS NO DOUBT A GENERAL

WEAKNESS OF THE DELEGATE SYSTEM WHICH THE 1974 CONSTITUTION
INSTITUTED AT ALL LEVELS, INCLUDING THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY. IN THEORY DESIGNED TO PROMOTE DIRECT
DEMOCRACY BY REPLACING ISOLATED PROFESSIONAL LEGISLATORS
WITH PART-TIME DELEGATES WHO REMAIN IN DIRECT CONTACT
WITH THEIR CONSTITUENTS, IN FACT THE DELEGATE SYSTEM
CONCENTRATES POWER IN THE HANDS OF THE REMAINING
PROFESSIONALS. THE AMATEUR DELEGATES HAVE NEITHER
THE TIME NOR EXPERTISE TO CHALLENGE THEM.
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